

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the Claims as indicated below:

1. (Once Amended) A [mold support] platen adapted to be slidably carried on at least one rail of an injection molding machine, said platen comprising:

a substantially rectangular front face specifically adapted to carry a mold half;

a back face parallel to and spaced from said front face specifically adapted to interface with at least one [clamp] column, said [clamp] column configured to produce a clamping force substantially in the center of said back face and applying a force substantially perpendicular to said front face;

a wall [having a predetermined thickness and height protruding] extending rearward from the periphery of said front face;

a plurality of spaced apart ribs extending in a predetermined pattern between and interconnecting each of said back face, said wall and said front face, wherein [said force from said clamp] generated clamp force acting through said column is substantially uniformly transmitted from said back face to said front face thereby creating a uniform sealing pressure distribution during clamp-up.

2. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 1, wherein said back face further comprises a center void located in the center of said back face thereby creating four separate coplanar faces for the application of said clamp force.

3. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 1, further including clearance for the passing of a plurality tie-bars the length of said injection molding machine, said plurality of tie-bars not supporting said platen.

4. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 1, further comprising a first and second stiffener, each said stiffener attached at a predetermined location between and connecting a pair of said ribs located at the top and bottom of said platen.

5. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 4, wherein said first and second stiffeners are substantially [~~t-shaped~~] T-shaped and further attach to said wall.

6. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 1, further comprising a first and second vertical member, each said vertical member attached at a predetermined position between and connecting a pair of said ribs located at the inside and outside of said platen.

7. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 1, further comprising at least one guide block in movable communication with said at least one rail.

8. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 7, further comprising at least one web attached to and connecting said wall to said at least one guide block.

9. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 1, including a mold adjacent said front face.

10. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 9, including an injection unit connected to said mold.

11. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 10, including a means for generating a mold clamping force adjacent said front face.

12. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 1, wherein said plurality of ribs forms a symmetrical pattern.

13. (Once Amended) The [mold support] platen of claim 1, wherein each said plurality of ribs is substantially trapezoidal.